

WHAT'S

keeping staff informed & current



Two advocates for a worthy cause



As HCA Program Supervisors for the Medical Services for Indigents (MSI) Provider Relations Office, both Janet Jackson, RN and Kathleen Gilbert, RN find fulfillment in advocating for the MSI clients they serve each day. From providing patients with information on various resources, to helping them acquire necessary health care services, or interfacing with providers to ensure accuracy regarding the program, they work together to ensure that both the client's needs and MSI program goals are fulfilled.

Janet and Kathleen serve a population of approximately 16,000 eligible MSI individuals and service providers and act as the customer support/trouble shooting department for the day-to-day operations of the MSI program. They assist in identifying areas of deficiency, trouble-shoot specific problems, develop and/or revise policies and procedures and monitor overall trends.

A graduate of Cal State Fullerton, Kathleen began her career with HCA in 1979 and served 12 years for the Correctional Medical Services program. She spent her first three years there as a correctional nurse, and later served as a Special Projects Coordinator. In 1991, she moved on to work for the MSI program.

"The most gratifying moments while working for the MSI program are when we receive unexpected thank you notes, letters and/or phone calls from patients," said Kathleen. "Learning that our interventions have made a difference in people's lives is fulfillment in itself."

Janet is a graduate of the University of Iowa and was first

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Shellmaker Water Quality Lab grand opening

Board of Supervisors' Chairman Tom Wilson and Vice Chairman Jim Silva joined HCA staffers and environmental and community representatives at an open house on June 30th to mark the grand opening of the Shellmaker Island Water Quality Laboratory, located in Newport Beach's Back Bay.

Shellmaker Island is the first dedicated County Public Health Water Quality Laboratory in California, and is responsible for testing water samples to protect the public from exposure to ocean and bay water that may be contaminated with sewage or may cause illness due to elevated bacteria levels.

Attendees were provided with an opportunity to tour the new facilities and observe how microbiologists and laboratory

technicians perform a variety of procedures involved in the water quality testing process. Both Supervisor Silva and Supervisor Wilson also received hands-on demonstrations and performed an actual water quality test on samples taken from their districts.

The temporary facility was provided by the City of Newport Beach and will be used by the Health Care Agency until the laboratory is incorporated into the future Marine Studies Center. The laboratory will eventually become one component of the larger Marine Studies Center to help improve water quality. Fea-

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(Above) Microbiologist Mariam Zhouandai assists Supervisor Wilson in filtering water samples to capture bacteria. (Right) Supervisor Silva utilizes some of the lab's equipment to perform water quality testing for indicator bacteria.

Prevention through art

Advertising research shows that with repeated exposure to consistent messages, attitudes and behaviors can change. These messages can influence us to purchase a product, see a movie, vote for something or someone or live a certain lifestyle. Based on this premise, the Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drug, and Violence Prevention Poster and Creative Writing Contest places student-created artwork throughout Orange County to encourage healthy lifestyles and decisions regarding alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use.

The contest, sponsored by HCA's Alcohol and Drug Education and Prevention Team (ADEPT), provides an opportunity for Orange County students to creatively depict lifestyles free from alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, and violence through art and creative writing. This year, more than 400 Orange County students from first through twelfth grade entered the contest.

Two of the contest categories included the "Counter Alcohol" and "Counter Tobacco" ads. These counter ads encourage young people to look beyond slick advertising messages and to reveal the truths about alcohol and tobacco use by exposing the myths and hidden messages of the ads. The categories are designed to counter product advertisements and depict or parody media messages that are in the public view daily.

Student winners were recognized at

a ceremony on June 5th and their winning artwork will be displayed in the ADEPT office at 405 W 5th Street, Suite 211 in Santa Ana; at the Orange County Department of Education in Costa Mesa; on the contest's website, www.ocde.k12.ca.us/



prevention; in 30 bus shelters located throughout Orange County; at the Bowers Kidseum in July; and various other community and school sites. For more information about the contest, please contact Penny Black, ADEPT Program Evaluation Specialist, at (714) 834-2969 or pblack@hca.co.orange.ca.us.

IRIS "Goes Live"

After several years of planning and months of customized designing and building by our multi-disciplinary team, IRIS (the Health Care Agency's Integrated Records Information System) will be up and running in September!

The Health Care Agency divisions that will "Go Live" on this date will include, from Behavioral Health Services and its selected contract provider agencies:

- Alcohol & Drug Abuse Services
- Adult Mental Health Services
- Children & Youth Services

and from Medical & Institutional Services:

- Correctional Mental Health

The staff who will be included in this first step are those currently using the MIS system, such as office support staff, Officer of the Day (OD) staff (in some locations), Service Chiefs, managers, and administration. If you will be part of the Step One rollout, training sign-ups will be taking place in July for the training sessions to be held in August and you will receive additional instructions about registering for the training.

This exciting first phase of IRIS implementation will include client registration, logging of services rendered, and reporting. Clinicians will not be included in this first phase of IRIS, except for OD clinicians at some locations. After the "go live" in September, design teams will be "back to the drawing board" to resume work on the clinical components of IRIS. Here's a sample of what will be "Up" in September:

To provide support to the staff while they are learning how to use IRIS, HCA Information Technology is pleased to announce that it has enhanced its Help Desk with state-of-the-art customer service and technical assistance. Staff members who are using IRIS will have one central place to call or e-mail about their questions, which will be logged, triaged, and tracked to provide users with timely and courteous answers to problems.

While it has been a long time since the start of HCA's IRIS project, it will soon be a reality! Many staff members who have received a "sneak-peak" at the system during its development are impressed with its capabilities. The customized features have been developed in consultation with representatives of the programs and services that will be using the system in order to meet current and future information needs.

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introduced to HCA in 1998 when she spearheaded a County pilot project while working for the MSI Program's contracted fiscal intermediary. In 1999, Janet joined HCA and began her career with the MSI program where she enjoys the interaction with patients and providers, the ability to field inquiries, identify problems and implement problem resolutions.

"Both Kathleen and I envision ourselves as always being advocates for those less fortunate than ourselves," said Janet. "One area of particular interest to us is the senior citizen population, where we would like to eventually dedicate more of our time in the near future."

Most recently, Janet and Kathleen were acknowledged for a Patient Access Program referrals project they worked on

to revamp the MSI pharmacy program. Through research, Janet and Kathleen determined that many pharmaceutical manufacturers would provide medications to MSI patients free of charge.

After determining which medications would qualify, they developed a referral list that was approved by the MSI Medical Review Committee for implementation. These medication referrals have since been meeting the needs of MSI patients by providing them with medication free of charge and saving the MSI program approximately \$680,000 annually.

Janet and Kathleen are acknowledged by their peers as being dedicated and committed to the well being of HCA's MSI clients, always willing to assist in any way possible to ensure that their clients are receiving the necessary health services and medications they need to lead healthy lives.

Two shine in Spotlight on Excellence



Evangeline Perez was presented with Cultural Competency's June Spotlight on Excellence Award during the June 25th Mental Health Board Meeting. Eva has worked with the County for the past 2 years as an Office Technician at the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services Clinic in Westminster. She currently attends Santa Ana College and would like to pursue classes to become a registered nurse or occupational therapist. Per her colleagues, Eva is recognized for her kind and considerate nature, always willing to go beyond her duties to ensure clients are informed about various health care services in their native language.

Pictured (left to right) are Rafael Canul, Sandra Fair, Evangelina Perez, Rose Danieri and Veronica Kelley.

The Cultural Competency Program presented its April Spotlight on Excellence Award to Mary Macias, a 15-year veteran of the Health Care Agency. Mary began her career with HCA in a clerical position with the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services program and currently serves as an Office Technician. Mary is regarded as a sensitive individual who always goes above and beyond to help the Agency's non-English speaking clients.

“We all live with the objective of being happy; our lives are all different and yet the same.
—Anne Frank**”**



Pictured (left to right) are Sandra Fair, Diane Holley, Mary Macias, Veronica Kelley and Rafael Canul.

AUGUST HEALTH OBSERVANCES

Cataract Awareness Month

National Immunization Awareness Month

Psoriasis Awareness Month

Spinal Muscular Atrophy Awareness Month

National Minority Donor Awareness Day 1

World Breastfeeding Week 1-7

WE'RE ON-LINE!

You can check out the latest issues of the Health Care Agency's newsletters by using this URL:

<http://www.ochealthinfo.com/newsletters/>

We will keep current issues on line for a year. Let us know how you like the convenience!

Shellmaker Island

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tures of the Center will include an aquarium, interactive exhibits, amphitheater, walking trails and tide pool simulations.

(Top right) Laboratory staff Martin Getrich, Bonnie Steward, Elizabeth Hernandez, Mariam Zhouwandai and Donna Ferguson, donned their lab coats as they greeted open house guests.

(Below) HCA Director Julie Poulson joined Supervisor Jim Silva, Newport Beach Mayor Pro Tem Tod Ridgeway and Jack Keating, President of the Newport Bay Naturalists and Friends, during a program announcing the opening of the Shellmaker Water Quality Laboratory on June 30th.

Shellmaker Island is a joint project involving the Health Care Agency, City of Newport Beach, California Department of Fish and Game, the California Coastal Commission, Orange Coast College, Newport Bay Naturalists and Friends, the University of California at Irvine, and other County agencies.



Focus groups planned

We all know that the Privacy Rule portion of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) took effect in April, but the initial implementation was really just the first step in an on-going implementation process.

Now that HCA Public Health and Behavioral Health clinics have a couple of months experience in using the new Notice of Privacy Practices (NPP), an effort will soon be underway to determine the effectiveness of that document. HCA's Office of Compliance will be holding focus group meetings this summer with both clinic clerical staff and clinicians to determine how the NPP has been received and to learn what changes are needed to make the NPP even more effective. "We want to make sure the NPP is user-friendly and to make sure that it helps our clients to better understand their rights to privacy and confidentiality," said Jody Barrera, HCA's HIPAA coordinator. "The clinic staff are the right group to provide that input, since they deal with our clients on a first-hand basis."

The focus groups will also provide an opportunity to determine how comfortable clinic staff are with HIPAA and its requirements as well as whether they feel prepared to answer questions from clients about HIPAA regulations. Based on the outcome of the focus group meetings, revisions may be made to the NPP and the input provided by staff may help to shape the topics for future training opportunities. Invitations to participate in the focus groups will be sent by e-mail to randomly selected staff. If you receive an e-mail invitation, we hope you will consider participating. Staff can also make comments and suggestions directly to the HCA coordinator at HIPAA@hca.co.orange.ca.us. In the future, additional focus groups are expected to be convened to explore other Compliance subjects.

The HCA Compliance Program offers a confidential telephone hotline to voice your concerns about any situation that may conflict with Compliance Program principles. You may call the hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at:
(866) 260-5636



Andrea receives Betsy White Award

Congratulations to Andrea Anzalone of Public Health's Maternal, Child & Adolescent Health (MCAH) Services program on her selection as the 2003 recipient of the Betsy White Outstanding Nurse of the Year Award.



Nominated by her peers and selected by a committee of management staff, supervisors and outside members, Andrea is recognized for her outstanding service to the community and her client-first philosophy.

As a registered nurse for the MCAH program, Andrea provides various family planning services, including well-woman care and education and cervical cancer screenings to the community's underserved women and their families.

The annual Betsy White Nurse of the Year Award is presented to nurses who demonstrate outstanding service and perpetuate the legacy of Betsy White, a now-retired clinic supervising public health nurse. Betsy is remembered as a well-respected supervisor whose leadership, service to the community and association with professional organizations, became the hallmark of her long public service career.

Students honored for winning essays

Local students were honored during the June 17th Board of Supervisors meeting for their winning essays in Nutrition Services 6th annual Health and Nutrition Essay Contest. Congratulations to Natalie Pifer, Elizabeth Geli, Paul Tuan Tran and Jonathon Nguyen who were presented with certificates of recognition by Chairman Wilson. In addition to the certificates, the students also received savings bonds to further enhance their education.

The four winning essays were displayed at the Hall of Administration and featured topics including healthy eating, the benefits of fruits and vegetables and the National School Lunch Program.

HCA's Nutrition Services program also presented certificates of participation to three Costa Mesa High School special needs students, Cheryl Frolich, Roni Torres and Brian King, who worked diligently on their nutrition essays for submission into the contest.

The annual essay contest, held during the month of March to celebrate National Nutrition Month, provides Orange County students with an opportunity to take responsibility for their health and food choices by writing an essay on nutrition-related topics. Each year the contest helps students explore reliable resources of information and think critically about good health.

The Nutrition Services program would like to thank all students and schools that participated in helping to make this year's essay contest a huge success. For more information about the Nutrition Services program or the essay contest, visit www.ochealthinfo.com/public/nutrition or call (714) 834-7952.

(Right) HCA's Nutrition Services Program presented certificates to Costa Mesa High School's special needs students on June 17th to acknowledge their participation in this year's Nutrition Services Essay Contest. Pictured are student Brian King and Costa Mesa High School Principal Robyn J. Moses.



Chairman Wilson presented students Natalie Pifer, Elizabeth Geli and Paul Tuan Tran with certificates of recognition and acknowledged their accomplishments as winners of the 2003 Nutrition Essay Contest at the Board of Supervisors meeting on June 17th.

Find the seed at the bottom of
your heart and bring forth a
flower.

—Shigenori Kameoka

Agency program honored at banquet

HCA's participation in the County Island Project was recently honored at a recognition banquet held at the Garden Grove Community Center. Among those representing the Agency at the event was Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services Program Supervisor Eva Perez, who accepted awards from Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez, and from Community Service Programs of Orange County (CSP) saluting HCA for its "outstanding dedication and support to the youth and families of the County Islands Project."

Pictured with the awards are (left to right) Sandra Fair, Behavioral Health Chief of Operations; Eva Perez; and Julie Poulson, HCA Director.





CC's annual Open House serves up ethnic cuisine

Behavioral Health's Cultural Competency Program hosted its annual Open House on Tuesday, June 24th to acquaint HCA staffers about the many available resources and services the program has to offer. Attendees toured the offices and viewed the vast display of various library items available for borrowing by County employees and contract agencies. Those attending also had the opportunity to sample a delicious variety of ethnic cuisine.

HCA's Cultural Competency Program is responsible for the development of a training model that fosters an understanding and appreciation of all cultures and to assist the Agency's programs in providing culturally competent services to members of the Orange County community. For more information, call the Cultural Competency Program at (714) 796-0118.



(Top left) Maggie Rawlins and Shehrnaz Irani sample a variety of the ethnic food served at Cultural Competency's Open House on June 24th.

(Bottom left) From enchiladas and carnitas to noodles and eggrolls, attendees had a hard time choosing what foods to try at Cultural Competency's Open House.

(Above) Dressed in their ethnic costumes, Rafael Canul, Veronica Kelley and Christy Castiglione welcomed guests to their annual Open House on June 24th.

health care agency
WHAT'S UP
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WHAT'S UP is a newsletter for employees of the County of Orange, CA, Health Care Agency.

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“The real measure of your wealth is how much you'd be worth if you lost all your money.”
—Anonymous